

Claims

1. (Currently Amended) An isolated polypeptide comprising:
 - (1) at least eight consecutive amino acids of amino acids 157-933 of SEQ ID NO: 1, wherein the isolated polypeptide is eight to ten amino acids in length and binds a Major Histocompatibility Complex (MHC) molecule ; or
 - (2) ~~an~~ the amino acid sequence set forth as SEQ ID NO: 1.
2. (Canceled).
3. (Canceled).
4. (Currently Amended) The isolated polypeptide of claim 1, comprising at the least eight consecutive amino acids of amino acids 157-933 of SEQ ID NO: 1, wherein the isolated polypeptide is eight to ten amino acids in length and binds an MHC molecule.
5. (Original) The isolated polypeptide of claim 1, comprising an amino acid sequence as set forth as SEQ ID NO: 1.
6. (Canceled).
7. (Previously Presented) An isolated nucleic acid sequence comprising the nucleic acid sequence as set forth as SEQ ID NO: 2, or a degenerate variant thereof.
8. (Previously Presented) The isolated nucleic acid sequence of claim 7, operably linked to a promoter.
9. (Previously Presented) An expression vector comprising the nucleic acid sequence of claim 7.

10. (Currently Amended) An isolated host cell transfected with the nucleic acid sequence of claim 7.

11. (Currently Amended) The isolated host cell of claim 10, wherein the host cell is a mammalian cell.

12. (Withdrawn) An antibody that specifically binds the polypeptide of claim 1.

13. (Withdrawn) The antibody of claim 12, wherein the antibody is a monoclonal antibody.

14. (Withdrawn) The antibody of claim 12 comprising a detectable label.

15. (Withdrawn) The antibody of claim 12, wherein the label is a fluorescent, enzymatic or radioactive label.

16. (Withdrawn) The antibody of claim 12 conjugated to a toxin.

17. (Withdrawn and Currently Amended) A method for detecting prostate cancer in a subject, comprising

contacting a sample obtained from the subject with the antibody of claim 12 for a sufficient amount of time to form an immune complex;

detecting the presence of the immune complex, wherein the presence of an immune complex demonstrates the presence of prostate cancer in the subject.

18. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 17, wherein the sample is a biopsy, blood, serum, or urine sample.

19. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 17, wherein the sample is a biopsy sample of non-prostate origin.

20. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 17, wherein the antibody is labeled.

21. (Withdrawn) A method for detecting a prostate cancer in a subject, comprising
detecting the expression of the polypeptide of claim 1 in a sample from the subject,
wherein an increase in the expression of the polypeptide as compared to a control indicates the
presence of the prostate cancer.

22. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 21, wherein detecting the expression of
polypeptide comprises detecting a polypeptide having a sequence set forth as SEQ ID NO: 2 in
the sample.

23. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 22, wherein detecting the expression of the
polypeptide comprises
contacting the sample with an antibody that specifically binds the polypeptide for a
sufficient amount of time to form an immune complex; and
detecting the presence of the immune complex.

24. (Currently Amended) A method for detecting a prostate cancer or prostate tissue in a
subject, comprising
detecting expression of the polynucleotide of claim 7 in a sample from the subject,
wherein an increase in the expression of the polynucleotide as compared to a control indicates
the presence of the prostate cancer or the prostate tissue.

25. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 24, wherein detecting the expression of
the polynucleotide comprises detecting mRNA in a Northern Blot analysis, an RNA Dot blot, or
a reverse transcriptase polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR) assay.

26. (Original) A method for producing an immune response against a cell expressing a
polypeptide of claim 1 in a subject, the method comprising
administering to the subject a therapeutically effective amount of the polypeptide of
claim 1, or a polynucleotide encoding the polypeptide, thereby producing the immune response.

27. (Original) The method of claim 26, wherein the immune response is a T cell response.

28. (Original) The method of claim 26, wherein the immune response is a B cell response.

29. (Original) The method of claim 26, wherein the subject has prostate cancer.

30. (Original) The method of claim 29, wherein the immune response decreases the growth of the prostate cancer.

31. (Withdrawn) A method for inhibiting the growth of a malignant cell expressing the polypeptide of claim 1, the method comprising,

(i) culturing cytotoxic T lymphocytes (CTLs) or CTL precursor cells with the polypeptide of claim 1 to produce activated CTLs or CTL precursors that recognize an NGEP expressing cell, and

(ii) contacting the malignant cell with the activated CTLs or CTLs matured from the CTL precursors,
thereby inhibiting the growth of the malignant cell.

32. (Withdrawn) A method for inhibiting the growth of a malignant cell, comprising:
contacting the malignant cell with an effective amount of a cell-growth inhibiting molecule, wherein the cell growth inhibiting molecule comprises an antibody which specifically binds a polypeptide comprising

(1) an amino acid sequence at least 90% homologous to SEQ ID NO: 1;

(2) at least eight consecutive amino acids of amino acids 157-933 of SEQ ID NO: 1, wherein the isolated polypeptide is eight to ten amino acids in length and binds an MHC molecule; or

(3) an amino acid sequence set forth as SEQ ID NO: 1;

wherein the antibody is covalently linked to an effector molecule which inhibits the growth of cells,
thereby inhibiting the growth of the malignant cell.

33. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 32, wherein said antibody is a monoclonal antibody.

34. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 32, wherein the effector molecule is a chemotherapeutic agent.

35. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 32, wherein the effector molecule comprises a toxic moiety.

36. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 35, wherein the toxic moiety is selected from the group consisting of ricin A, abrin, diphtheria toxin or a subunit thereof, *Pseudomonas* exotoxin or a portion thereof, saporin, restrictocin or gelonin.

37. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 35, wherein the *Pseudomonas* exotoxin is selected from the group consisting of PE35, PE37, PE38, and PE40.

38. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 35, wherein the malignant cell is *in vivo*.

39. (Currently Amended) A ~~pharmaceutical~~ composition comprising a ~~therapeutically effective amount~~ of the polypeptide of claim 1 in a ~~pharmaceutically acceptable~~ carrier.

40. (Canceled).

41. (Withdrawn and Currently amended) A ~~pharmaceutical~~ composition comprising a ~~therapeutically effective amount~~ of the antibody of claim 12 in a ~~pharmaceutically acceptable~~ carrier.

42. (Withdrawn) A method for reducing the number of prostate cancer cells in a subject, comprising

administering to the subject a therapeutically effective amount of the polypeptide of claim 1, wherein the administration of the NGEP results in an immune response to NGEP, thereby reducing the number of prostate cancer cells in the subject.

43. (Withdrawn and Currently Amended) A method for reducing the number of prostate cancer cells in a subject, comprising

administering to the subject a therapeutically effective amount of the polynucleotide of claim 6, wherein ~~the administration of~~ administering the polynucleotide results in an immune response,

thereby reducing the number of prostate cancer cells in the subject.

44. (Withdrawn) A method for reducing the number of prostate cancer cells in a subject, comprising

administering to the subject a therapeutically effective amount of the antibody of claim 16,

thereby reducing the number of prostate cancer cells in the subject.

45. (Withdrawn) A kit for detecting an polynucleotide encoding NGEP in a sample, comprising

an isolated nucleic acid sequence of at least ten nucleotides in length that specifically binds to SEQ ID NO: 2 under highly stringent hybridization conditions; and instructions for the use of the isolated nucleic acid sequence.

46. (Withdrawn) A kit for detecting an NGEP polypeptide in a sample, comprising an monoclonal antibody that specifically binds to an antigenic epitope of SEQ ID NO: 1; and

instructions for the use of the antibody.

47. (Previously Presented) The polypeptide of claim 1, consisting of at least eight consecutive amino acids of amino acids 157-933 of SEQ ID NO: 1, wherein the isolated polypeptide is eight to ten amino acids in length and binds a Major Histocompatibility Complex (MHC) molecule.

48. (Previously Presented) A fusion protein, comprising

a) the polypeptide of claim 1, wherein the polypeptide consists of at least eight consecutive amino acids of amino acids 157-933 of SEQ ID NO: 1, wherein the isolated polypeptide is eight to ten amino acids in length and binds a Major Histocompatibility Complex (MHC) molecule; and

b) a heterologous polypeptide.

49. (Previously Presented) An isolated polynucleotide encoding the polypeptide of claim 47.

50. (Previously Presented) The isolated nucleic acid sequence of claim 49 operably linked to a promoter.

51. (Currently Amended) An expression vector comprising the nucleic acid sequence of claim 50.

52. (Currently Amended) An isolated host cell transfected with the nucleic acid sequence of claim 50.

53. (Currently Amended) The isolated host cell of claim 52, wherein the host cell is a mammalian cell.

54. (New) The isolated polypeptide of claim 1, consisting of the amino acid sequence set forth as amino acids 157-933 of SEQ ID NO: 1.

55. (New) The isolated polypeptide of claim 54, consisting of the amino acid sequence set forth as one of SEQ ID NO: 3-10.